

Fighting for Senior Fishermen!!

"The Environment Committee has placed, H.B. 5316, An Act Concerning Sport Fishing Licensees for Anglers Who Are Sixty-Five Years of Age Or Older, on the public hearing agenda for Wednesday, February 24th. This bill would place a fee on residents sixty-five years of age or older on or after January 1st, 2017 a five dollar fee to obtain a marine waters fishing license and a seven dollar fee for a resident all water fishing license." ref. Rep. Belisto article, Feb 22, 2016.

I am CT's first Registered Guide currently organizing the now 76 Guides ; ref. 2015 License Sales. Together with representatives from Inner City Minorities, Bait Shops, and Recreational Anglers we successfully created/developed/implemented the Marine Advisory Group(MAG) when Beckwith/Smith were the Head of CT Fisheries. I became the first Chairman and we were recognized by the Fishing Advisory Council; MAG continues as a link with recreational fisher people and the State of CT Marine Fisheries group. Those with limited means realized opportunities for marine harvests from shore including shorter length limits of some food source species as a result of some of our efforts with MAG.

Be advised there are those, including many Senior Citizens -defined as 65 years and older, who absolutely have limited means and who "FISH to LIVE". I have witnessed license sales of over 4,000 per year(check the facts!) at Dee's Bait and Tackle, Clay Street, New Haven, CT since paper licenses became law in CT and personally documented/issued many "Senior Sales" of free Hunting/Fishing Licenses. UNDERSTAND , WITHOUT EXCEPTION, EACH SENIOR CELEBRATES A CERTAIN RIGHT OF PASSAGE, MALE and FEMALE, THAT IS RECOGNIZED AND CELEBRATED BY MANY INCLUDING THOSE OF US DOCUMENTING/ISSUING LICENSES. Most often correlated Retirement plans are shared, FINANCES ARE NOTED AS LIMITED and Statements such as " at least I get something from the State(CT) after all these years of paying...paying...and paying".

We see at the Bait Shop the purchase of one wire-leadered hook, one sinker and a bunker(bait) with sums carefully counted ; Dee's also provides credit, many time

times the debtor dies before paying the bill in full; the loss lamented is "one less Fisherman on the water tomorrow ..." never a word is uttered about lost payment. We realize an American Tradition actively celebrated with applied psychologies of "quiet waters...", First light on the water..., Fish On!..." and the sociology of shared sporting communities. Our Senior Citizens have payed and payed and payed to sustain an existence in the State of CT- THEY HAVE EARNED A MEASURE OF SOCIETAL CONSIDERATION WITH A FREE HUNTING/FISHING LICENSE FOR LIFE-AS IT IS IN MOST STATES- AND MEMBERSHIP IN A UNIQUE SPORTING CLASS.

So, it is not hearsay nor conjecture, it is not prejudicial nor irrelevant posture but rather a STATEMENT OF FACT, with probability greater than chance, that this Bill is an UNJUST ENRICHMENT. A betrayal of sorts by those supposedly accurately representing the sporting population is seemingly underway.

Organization continues to document vigorous opposition to H.B.5316; if passed into law immediate repeal processes citing voting record will follow.

Thank-you for your review and attention to this matter. VOTE NO TO BILL H.B.5316.

*Respectfully Yours,
Master Capt. James W. Wiesenberg BS, MBA, MMO
Professional Guide/Outfitter and Sports Folk Advocate*